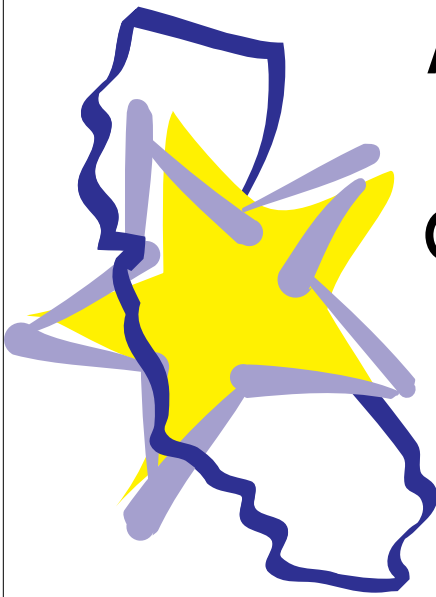


# California Standards Tests

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## Addendum to the *May 2002* Teacher Guide for the California Writing Standards Tests at Grades 4 and 7

This addendum includes the writing tasks administered in spring 2002 with sample student responses and teacher commentaries. This document should be used in conjunction with the *May 2002 Teacher Guide*.

**August 2003**

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**California Department of Education**

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## For More Information

For more information about the STAR Program, contact the Standards and Assessment Division of the California Department of Education at (916) 445-8765 (phone), at (916) 319-0969 (fax), at <[STAR@cde.ca.gov](mailto:STAR@cde.ca.gov)> (e-mail), or at <<http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/star/>> (Internet).

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# Acknowledgments

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We wish to thank all those who helped prepare the teacher guides for the 2001 and 2002 California Writing Standards Tests at Grades 4 and 7. Special Thanks to Karen Hayashi, administrator, Elk Grove Unified School District; Carol Jago, teacher, Santa Monica High School; JoAnne Matney, teacher, Rocklin Unified School District; Judy Welcome (Retired), Director, Curriculum and Instruction, Shasta County Office of Education; and Darby Williams, Executive Director, Capitol Region Professional Development Center, Sacramento County Office of Education, for their excellent work in helping to prepare these guides.

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# Introduction

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In February 2000, Governor Davis signed legislation to add writing assessments to California's standards-based testing program at the elementary and middle grade levels. These assessments, the California Writing Standards Tests, were administered in 2001 and 2002 at grades 4 and 7.

The California Writing Standards Tests address writing application standards for grades 4 and 7. At grade 4, these standards require students to produce four types of writing: narratives, summaries, information reports, and responses to literature. At grade 7, they require students to produce five types of writing: narratives, persuasive essays, summaries, responses to literature, and research reports. The California Writing Standards Tests do not assess information reports at grade 4 and research reports at grade 7 because these writing assignments require extended time for students to gather information and/or research topics before writing can begin.

In addition to the writing tests, the 2001 and 2002 STAR English-Language Arts Standards Tests at grades 4 and 7 contained 90 multiple-choice questions at each grade level. These included 35 questions specifically written to address the California English-language arts content standards and 55 items selected from the Stanford 9 test for their alignment with the content standards.

Beyond 2002, the STAR English-Language Arts Standards Tests at grades 4 and 7 will continue to include a California Writing Standards Test. The writing test at each of these grades might address any of the writing types identified as appropriate for testing at that grade level.

The *Addendum to the May 2002 Teacher Guide for the California Writing Standards Tests at Grades 4 and 7* presents the tasks used on the 2002 California Writing Standards Tests, along with sample student responses and teacher commentaries. The *Teacher Guide for the California Writing Standards Tests at Grades 4 and 7*, released in May 2002, included the 2001 writing tasks with sample student responses and teacher commentaries, as well as examples of all writing genres that may be tested at each grade along with student responses and teacher commentaries. This addendum is designed to be used with the May 2002 document.

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## **Grade 4 and 7 Writing Tasks and Scoring Rubrics**

The 2002 California Writing Standards Test writing tasks at grades 4 and 7 are shown on pages 6–7, 13, 21–22, and 28 of this guide. Students in schools, tracks, or programs in session on April 9, 2002, responded to the task administered on that date or on the makeup date, April 10. Students in schools, tracks, or programs not in session on April 9 responded to the task administered on May 21 or on the makeup date, May 22. Students at both grade levels had 60 minutes to read the tasks and write their essays.

Student responses to the writing tasks administered in 2001 and 2002 were scored using a four-point rubric, with four being the highest. Two readers evaluated each response, and the student's reported score was the sum of these two ratings. If the two readers assigned scores that differed by more than one point, a third reader scored the response. The scoring rubrics for grades 4 and 7 are shown on pages 19–20 and 35–36.

In 2001, individual student scores on the writing tasks were reported separately from scores on the multiple-choice portion of the California Standards Tests in English-Language Arts. In 2002, each student's result on the writing task was reported as a separate writing application score and also was combined with the student's multiple-choice score to determine the student's overall English-language arts performance level.

## **Sample Student Responses and Teacher Commentaries**

Sample student responses, drawn from field tests, to the writing task for the 2002 Grade 4 California Writing Standards Test administered on April 9 and 10, along with teacher commentaries illustrating how criteria for each score point were applied during the scoring process, are shown on pages 8–12 of this guide. Sample student responses to the task administered on May 21 and 22, along with teacher commentaries, are shown on pages 14–18.

Sample student responses to the 2002 Grade 7 California Writing Standards Test writing task administered on April 9 and 10, along with teacher commentaries, are shown on pages 23–27. Sample student responses to the task administered on May 21 and 22, along with teacher commentaries, are shown on pages 29–34.

The sample responses, drawn from field tests, illustrate student work at each score point. It should be remembered, however, that each essay represents only one example of student work at a particular score level. In reality, the range of student work within any of the four score points is broad. To teachers familiar with a six-point rubric, some sample responses that receive a four on a four-point scale may seem less qualified than responses that earn a six on a six-point scale. The four-point responses will include some that would fall into a score range below the highest level on a six-point scale. It also should be remembered that, within a given score point, responses will demonstrate differing combinations of strengths and weaknesses.

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The writing types tested in 2002 included narrative at grade 4 and persuasive at grade 7. It should be noted that since narrative, summary, and response to literature writing may be tested at grade 4 and since narrative, persuasive, response to literature, and summary writing may be tested at grade 7, the types of writing students may be asked to produce can change annually.

## **Uses for This Guide**

This guide presents types of writing tested on the 2002 California Writing Standards Tests at grades 4 and 7 as well as student responses and teacher commentaries to illustrate how the scoring rubrics are applied. The information in this guide also may help teachers evaluate student writing in a manner consistent with the scoring of the California Writing Standards Tests. Teachers can examine the scoring rubric, read the sample student responses and teacher commentaries, and use these as guidance in applying the rubric to their students' writing. Since the rubrics are derived from the writing content standards, scoring student work with the rubric may help clarify the writing skills students need for these writing tests. To further familiarize students with state standards addressed on the writing tests, students also may benefit from using the rubric to score other students' writing. These suggested activities will enable teachers and students to use rubric-based scoring as a diagnostic tool to help identify areas of strength and weakness in student writing.

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# Grade 4 Narrative Writing Task

## Administered on April 9 and 10, 2002

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The writing task below was administered to students in grade 4 who took the California Writing Standards Test on April 9 or 10, 2002. The prompt used for the May 21 and 22 administration is shown on page 13. Sample student responses and teacher commentaries are included for both tasks.

### Narrative Writing Task

#### Directions

- In this writing test, you will write a story.
- You have 60 minutes to plan, write, and proofread.

#### Scoring

Your writing will be scored on how well you:

- tell a story about an event or an experience;
- organize the story to have a beginning, a middle, and an end;
- use details to help the reader imagine the event or the experience; and
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

#### Writing the Story

Imagine that you are asked to keep an elephant for a week. Write a story about your unusual experiences with your elephant.

Your writing will be scored on how well you:

- tell a story about an event or an experience;
- organize the story to have a beginning, a middle, and an end;
- use details to help the reader imagine the event or the experience; and
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

### Narrative Task—Grade 4

Student responses to this narrative task and to the task on page 13 were scored using the Grade 4 Scoring Rubric shown on pages 19–20. This rubric incorporates portions of the English-language arts writing strategies and written conventions content standards that address writing in general and includes criteria specific to narrative writing.

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## **Standard**

### **Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)**

2.1 Write narratives:

- a. Relate ideas, observations, or recollections of an event or experience.
- b. Provide a context to enable the reader to imagine the world of the event or experience.
- c. Use concrete sensory details.
- d. Provide insight into why the selected event or experience is memorable.

## **Grade 4 Focus**

For this task and for the task on page 13, students were expected to tell a complete story with a beginning, middle, and end. Students who did well incorporated concrete details, established a clear point of view, and demonstrated a sound grasp of writing conventions. Effective narratives exhibited a range of strategies such as dialogue and use of descriptive detail.



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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for April 9 and 10 Grade 4 Narrative Task

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## Score Point 4 Essay

### Student Work

One day, I was asked to buy bread at the bakery. I put on my jacket and walked to the bakery. When I got there, I noticed a strange man wearing a raincoat and a hat. I took a closer look and I saw a leash in his hand. The other end was inside a giant bush. I wanted to be polite so I tried not to stare.

I walked into the bakery and bought a loaf of bread. It was fresh from the oven and I could smell it. Once I stepped outside I was grabbed by my feet and was turned upside down. The bread fell out of my hands. "No, catch the bread," I yelled. A mighty force threw me high into the air and pow, I landed in a tree. I looked down and saw an elephant eating the bread. "Hey," I yelled "that's mine."

I climbed down the tree and ran over to the elephant. "That was my bread," I yelled. "And I'm your elephant," the large gray animal said. "You can talk," I said. "Of course," the elephant said, "all elephants can talk, they are just shy except for me," the elephant said. "Well, then wheres the proof," I said. "Read the sign," he said. I looked at the sign, it said, for Andrew Alix. "Okay," I said, and I took the elephant to my house.

When we got there I took him to my backyard, gave him peanuts, and turned on the hose encase he wanted something to drink. "Excuse me," the elephant said, "what am I supposed to drink," "Water," I said. "But I don't drink water, I drink grape juice," the elephant said. "Well deal with it," I said. I walked into the house to do my homework. I was so tired I just went to sleep.

"Ronk, ronk, I need more peanuts," the elephant said. "Go to sleep" I yelled. "I'm hungry," the elephant said. I got up and gave him some more peanuts. "Now be quiet," I said.

### Commentary

This essay clearly addresses all parts of the writing task, relating a thoroughly developed sequence of events that illustrates the writer's week by focusing on its first two days. The writer maintains a consistent point of view, a well-organized structure, and appropriate paragraphing. The writer uses dialogue to suggest as the central idea a contentious relationship between writer and elephant. Sentences, most of which rely on nouns and active verbs ("grabbed"; "threw"; "landed"), move quickly. Sentence structures are mixed effectively, especially in paragraphs containing dialogue. Sensory details, including sound ("Ronk, ronk") and smell (bread "fresh from the oven"), help the reader imagine the experience.

The writer demonstrates excellent understanding of conventions, especially within quotations. The writing contains a few errors in conventions—no apostrophe in "wheres," no question mark at the end of a quoted question: "what am I supposed to drink," a misspelling ("encase" for "in case")—but these do not interfere with the reader's understanding.

---

# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for April 9 and 10 Grade 4 Narrative Task

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## Score Point 4 Essay (continued)

### Student Work

The next morning, the elephant said, "I need a bath." "How do I do that?" I asked. "With soap and a washcloth," he said. I got soap and a cloth, and climbed up on his back to give him a bath. When I finished, I was soaking wet and tired. I went in the house to take a nap. "Ronk, ronk, you forgot to dry me," the elephant said.

The week went just like that. Whining, yelling, and honking. Finally, one day, a man came and picked him up and took him away.

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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for April 9 and 10 Grade 4 Narrative Task

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## Score Point 3 Essay

### Student Work

Today is the day I go and get my elephant, for a week. I got to the shelter and a man asked if I wanted a male or female elephant. I told him I wanted a small female. The next thing I knew there was an elephant the size of a thumb. On the way home, I lost the elephant in the car about ten times. The first day was a breeze. All I did was give it a name, and feed it. Wow, I never noticed they could eat so much, exspecily the little ones. Day two I interduced it to my dog. The dog hated the elephant. It tried to eat it, but I knew what the dog was doing and stopped it. The third day seemed a little better. I had to go to the store, so I put the elephant in my purse it seemed to like it in there. But Thursday was a huge challenge. I had to give the elephant a bath. It kept getting lost in all the bubbles. Friday I asked my friend to babysit the little lady. So my friend Lindsay said she would. By the time I was back from getting the car washed, Lindsay had lost the elephant 15 or more times. Day six I spent the whole day with my little friend. We ate together, slept together, even read together. But soon enough Sunday comes, so I bring the elephant back to the shelter and give her a little gift. Who knows we may never see each other again.

### Commentary

Through narration of a sequence of events that tells a story, this essay demonstrates a general understanding of purpose. The writer maintains a mostly consistent organization, including a beginning, a middle that moves day by day through the week, and a conclusion, but the verb tense switches abruptly to the present in the next-to-last sentence. Development is adequate, and the essay contains some description—putting the elephant in the purse and losing it in the bubbles, for example—but for the most part, events are not elaborated with detail. The essay contains a central idea that conveys the writer’s difficulties with and enjoyment of the elephant.

The writer uses simple, complex, and compound sentences and at least one effective example of parallel structure—“We ate together, slept together, even read together.” The essay contains errors in conventions. For example, there are misspellings (“exspecily”; “interduced”), needless commas in places, and commas lacking in others. For the most part, however, conventions are sound, and the errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding.

---

# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for April 9 and 10 Grade 4 Narrative Task

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## Score Point 2 Essay

### Student Work

One day after school I was walking home with my best friend *Gabriel Juarez*. We got our bikes and started to ride around when this man came up to me and asked me to take care of his elaphent. I didn't know what to say, finally I said yes. He told me to come by on monday morning at 7. So I went, but when I got there nobody was there but a sign that said, "this is the elaphent I want you to take care of for a week." I looked up and saw it.

I went over to get it when it got scared and started to run down the street. I got on my bike and started to ride after it. By the time I got to school it was 8. During the week we went to the mountains, and the lake. We went swiming and making an avalanche and running from it.

But, at the end of the week I had to say good bye to my friend.

### Commentary

The writer appears to understand that the task requires a story, but after the introduction the essay focuses on one brief incident—the elephant running away—followed by a short summary of events. Development is minimal—in paragraph two, for example, the reader is not told what happened after the boy chased the elephant or what “making an avalanche and running from it” involved. Description is limited. The writer refers to mountains, a lake, swimming, and the avalanche, but offers no further detail.

The essay lacks a central idea—the first part of paragraph two suggests that the elephant caused difficulties and the second part that the writer and elephant had fun, but these two impressions are not melded into a coherent thesis. Although the essay contains simple, complex, and compound sentences, it also contains run-on and rambling sentences and one sentence that lacks parallelism/verb consistency: “We went swiming and making an avalanche and running from it.” There are several errors in conventions. These include a missing capital (“monday”), misspellings (“elaphent”; “swiming”), and unnecessary commas in the fourth sentence in paragraph two and in the final sentence. These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding.

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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for April 9 and 10 Grade 4 Narrative Task

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## Score Point 1 Essay

### Student Work

I had a elephant it was very unusual. He is so weird he acts like other anamls I wonder why? When I frist met him I sramed and I want like this Ahhhhh!!!!!! I scared him he was a tiger and I wanted him and I took him home with me he is very weird and unuasl and so Im weird and unusual too. But they said I could have him for a week and the week past I had to give up my elephant that how I lost my pet.

### Commentary

This essay does not relate a story or sequence of events, and it reflects no understanding of the purpose of the task. The writer tries to develop the idea that the elephant is “very unusual” but does so by repeatedly claiming that the elephant is “weird,” making vague comparisons (“he acts like other anamls”; “he was a tiger”), and making an irrelevant aside (“Im weird and unusual too”). Except for the reference to the tiger, the essay lacks descriptive detail. The second, fourth, and final sentences are run-ons. The many errors in conventions include mistakes in spelling (“anamls”; “sramed” for “screamed”) and problems with contractions (“Im” lacks an apostrophe; “that” where “that’s” is needed). Some errors interfere with the reader’s understanding.

---

# Grade 4 Narrative Writing Task

## Administered on May 21 and 22, 2002

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The writing task below was administered to students in grade 4 who took the California Writing Standards Test on May 21 or 22, 2002. Sample student responses and teacher commentaries are presented on the pages following the task shown below.

### Narrative Writing Task

#### Directions

- In this writing test, you will write a story.
- You have 60 minutes to plan, write, and proofread.

#### Scoring

Your writing will be scored on how well you:

- tell a story about an event or an experience;
- organize the story to have a beginning, a middle, and an end;
- use details to help the reader imagine the event or the experience; and
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

#### Writing the Story

Imagine that you and a friend decide to help a lady in your neighborhood clean her house. She gives you a box full of things she doesn't want. The next day you and your friend look through the box and find something very unusual. Write a story about what you find and what happens next.

Your writing will be scored on how well you:

- tell a story about an event or an experience;
- organize the story to have a beginning, a middle, and an end;
- use details to help the reader imagine the event or the experience; and
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

---

# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 4 Narrative Task

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## Score Point 4 Essay

### Student Work

One boring Saturday morning, my friend and I were walking down the street when we passed Miss Abby's house. Miss Abby was cleaning out her garage. She was a short old little woman with gray hair. She looked like she needed help, so we went to help her. We put old things in one box, and things she wanted to keep in another. Finally we were finished. Miss Abby gave us a box of things she didn't want. "You deserve this for being such good little girls!" she cackled, smiling a toothy smile. Before we could say, "No thank you" she went in her house.

We took the big box and managed to get it to my house. The next day when we were in the safety of my room, we slowly opened the box. We gasped at the sight of one of the things. Inside was a very strange egg, which had purple and orange spots. We just stared at it, our mouths open. I turned to look at my door, to make sure it was closed. Suddenly my friend screamed, "Look!" I looked at the egg. It was quivering and shaking, and jumping and rolling. Then there was a loud CRACK! A furry GOBLIN poked his head out of the egg! It had bulgy yellow eyes, furry ears, greasy little paws, and a green nose which twitched constantly. We screamed and screamed! To my horror it climbed out of the egg and began to jump on my bed! "STOP IT!" I screamed. I jumped and grabbed that horrid creature by its tail. It squealed and put up a big fight, but I managed to stuff it in the box.

When my friend and I finally calmed down, I said, "I think the old lady is a witch! I read in a book witches sometimes keep goblins as pets!" My friend whimpered. "You mean," she choked, "she's a WITCH?" I nodded my head. "I want to find more about her!" said my friend suddenly. I nodded again. So we opened the box, grabbed the goblin before he could

### Commentary

This essay fully addresses the task, describing what the writer and her friend find in a box and explaining what happens next. The essay shows a clear understanding of purpose, engaging the reader early with concrete language consisting of specific days ("Saturday") and names ("Miss Abby"), vivid verbs ("cackled"; "gasped"), and visual description ("a short old little woman with gray hair"; "a toothy smile"), and relating colorful, detailed events throughout the narrative. The narrative is effectively structured, moving from details about the goblin which lead to the realization Miss Abby is a witch to a discussion of the glass ball that helps explain her witchery. The essay displays good sentence variety and use of transitions, as shown, for example, by the sequence in paragraph four: "We rung the doorbell, left the box on the door mat, and jumped into the bushes. The old lady opened the door. When she saw the box, she looked puzzled. Then she shook her head and took in the box."

The writer demonstrates good use of the conventions of capitalization, punctuation (especially quotation marks and parentheses), and spelling. There are a few errors that would be expected in first-draft writing, but these do not interfere with the reader's understanding.

---

## Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 4 Narrative Task

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### Score Point 4 Essay (continued)

#### Student Work

run away, and shut him in my closet. Then we found a little glass ball filled with stuff that glowed green, old bottles, (probably used for potions) a cloak, and a spider that was yucky! We dropped it quickly in the box. We also found out the little glass ball told the FUTURE! All you had to do was look inside it, and you would see what would happen. I saw my friend bang her knee on my bed post. In a few minutes, that happened! If you shook it a few times, you would see what would happen in years to come. I saw myself at age 16.

The next day, we brought that strange stuff (including the goblin) to the old lady's house. We rung the doorbell, left the box on the door mat, and jumped into the bushes. The old lady opened the door. When she saw the box, she looked puzzled. Then she shook her head and took in the box. We were happy to get rid of that junk. But there was one thing we kept. And that was the future telling glass ball. One day when I looked into it, I saw myself talking to the old lady. I looked away from it quickly. I wondered what would happen. But that is probably another story.



---

# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 4 Narrative Task

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## Score Point 3 Essay

### Student Work

It was a sunny afternoon. My friend Becky and I were cleaning Miss Hanah's garage. We just finished the third shelf, and went to look for Miss Hanah. "Miss Hanah!" I called, "Miss Hanah!" The door opened, and we went in. Miss Hanah was a 60 year old woman, but she didn't act it. She loved horses, all of her walls were covered with horses and unicorns. Becky and I had a special love for horses also. We would of been out at horse camp but we decided to clean Miss Hanah's garage. We got ten dollars plus a home baked cookie. "Well you girls have certainly done a very good job... I think I have something you girls might like." She came back carrying a brown box. She carryied the box outside and set it on the lawn. "You girls have a look in this box and keep whatever you want." "Wow this is cool" we said together. We dug through the box, and I found a glass horse that shone in the sun like a crystal. "Becky, Becky look at this!!" I wispered "It looks so real!!" "it sure is beautiful" said Becky in awe. I set the glass horse on the lawn behind us, along with some other nick-nacks we found interesting. We heard a neigh and looked behind us. The glass horse was transformed into a real horse! It was sparkaly white, with blue-green eyes. We got on the horse and rode around. We haddnt noticed that the horse had wings. The horse flew, sailed over clouds, and castles in the sky, birds, and trees two miles high. Finally after a glorious ride we landed on the lawn. "Thank you horse" we said together in wispers. We turned around and covered our ears. I picked up the magical glass horse, sparkaling in the sun and put it in my pocket. I rode home on my bike and put the horse on my dresser. I told my mom all about it. She diddnt believe me. I knew she wouldn't but I knew deep inside my heart that I had a secret, about my glass horse.

### Commentary

The essay addresses all parts of the task, developing a story with a beginning, middle, and end. In places—such as when the girls find the glass horse—the writer demonstrates good use of detail. The organization is mostly consistent but is flawed by the peripheral information that the girls would have been at horse camp if they had not been with Miss Hanah. The central idea—that the horse is magic—is supported through visual description (“sparkaly white, with blue-green eyes”; “glass horse, sparkaling in the sun”) and action (“The horse flew, sailed over clouds, and castles in the sky . . .”). One of the essay’s strengths is touches of lively dialogue: “Becky, Becky look at this!!” I wispered ‘It looks so real!’ ‘it sure is beautiful’ said Becky in awe.”

The essay exhibits varied sentence types but contains one comma splice. Its greatest weakness is several errors in conventions, such as misspelled words (“carryied” for “carried”; “sparkaly” for “sparkly”), confusion about contractions (“haddnt”; “diddnt”), and use of “of” as a verb (“We would of been”), but despite their prevalence these do not interfere with the reader’s understanding.

---

# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 4 Narrative Task

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## Score Point 2 Essay

### Student Work

Once upon a time my friend Bryan and I were riding our bikes. We were going to ride around the block when all of a sudden we saw a nice old lady cleaning out her garage. We asked her if she needed help lifting heavy things, and she said yes. So we went and parked our bikes and got right to work. There was one box that was so heavy that it took all three of us to lift it. Then we got thirsty and she asked us if we wanted some lemonade and we were so happy when she said that we said yes please. Then she went inside and got some well my friend Bryan and I got board so we dicided to look threw the big box that took all three of them to pick up. So they went over there to see what was in there and when we looked we were shocked to see what was in it. There was all sorts of things like gold, silver, bronze, and jewelry. When she came back out She said that they could keep all of it. So we said are you sure you don't want it she said i'm sure so we took it home and our dads and moms said "go return that back to that nice old lady. We did and all of us lived hapilly ever after.

### Commentary

This essay addresses only part of the task: the characters find something in a box, but there is little about what happens after the box is opened. Although the essay contains a sequence of events, they are so thinly developed that they cannot be said to tell a story. The essay rambles with little sense of organization, and the point of view is inconsistent, switching from first person ("Bryan and I") to third person ("they") halfway through. Although there is a glimmer of a central idea—the jewelry is valuable—this is never fully developed because description and elaboration are almost nonexistent.

The essay contains varied sentence types, but many sentences ramble and some run together without punctuation. The essay contains spelling errors ("board" for "bored"; "dicided"; "hapilly"), capitalization errors ("i'm"), and agreement errors ("There was all sorts of things"), but these do not interfere with the reader's understanding.

---

# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 4 Narrative Task

---

## Score Point 1 Essay

### Student Work

I decided to help a Lady clean out her garage when I was done she gave me a box ful of stuff that she doesn't need the next day my friend and I were Look through it and we find a few unusual thangs the frist thang that we saw was a million dollar bill the second thang was a Genie bottle the third thang was a diamond I spent the million dollars on a drit bike the next was the Genie Bottle my frist wish was a car the second was a million dollars the third one was Disney Land in my house and I put the Diamond on a neclis.

The End

### Commentary

This essay addresses part of the task, describing what the writer finds in a box and what follows, but the result is more a list than a story. The writer suggests that the objects in the box were unusual, but this idea is not illustrated through description or sensory detail. The essay begins and ends abruptly without introduction or conclusion, and since it consists of a single run-on sentence, there is no structure beyond sequential listing.

The essay contains misspellings (“thang”; “neclis”), reversals of letters (“frist” for “first”; “drit” for “dirt”), and capitalization of common nouns (“Lady”; “Genie”). The errors in conventions that most interfere with understanding, however, are the absence of periods and capital letters to identify beginnings and endings of sentences.

---

# Grade 4 Scoring Rubric

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The scoring rubric that follows is used to assign scores to students' written responses on the grade 4 writing tests. This rubric includes two sets of criteria. The criteria under "the writing" are adapted from the English-language arts writing strategies and written conventions of English content standards. These criteria are used to evaluate written responses in all genres for their clarity of purpose, central idea, and organization, and for their use of supporting evidence, sentence variety, and writing conventions. The criteria under "narrative writing," "summary writing," and "response to literature writing," adapted from the grade 4 writing applications standards for these genres, are used to evaluate student writing in the specific genres to which they apply.

---

## 4 The writing—

- *clearly* addresses all parts of the writing task.
- demonstrates a *clear* understanding of purpose.
- maintains a *consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate.
- includes a *clearly presented* central idea with *relevant* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes a *variety* of sentence types.
- contains *few, if any, errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

## Narrative writing—

- provides a *thoroughly developed* sequence of *significant* events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- includes *vivid* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to visualize the events or experiences.

## Summary writing—

- is characterized by paraphrasing of the main idea(s) and *significant* details.

## Response to literature writing—

- demonstrates a *clear* understanding of the literary work.
- provides *effective* support for judgments through *specific* references to text and prior knowledge.

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## 3 The writing—

- addresses all parts of the writing task.
- demonstrates a *general* understanding of purpose.
- maintains a *mostly consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate.
- presents a central idea with *mostly* relevant facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes a *variety* of sentence types.
- contains *some errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

## Narrative writing—

- provides an *adequately developed* sequence of significant events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- includes *some* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to visualize the events or experiences.

## Summary writing—

- is characterized by paraphrasing of the main idea(s) and *significant* details.

## Response to literature writing—

- demonstrates an understanding of the literary work.
- provides *some* support for judgments through references to text and prior knowledge.

2

### The writing—

- addresses *only parts* of the writing task.
- demonstrates *little* understanding of purpose.
- maintains an *inconsistent* point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure.
- *suggests* a central idea with *limited* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes *little* variety in sentence types.
- contains *several errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors **may** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

### Narrative writing—

- provides a *minimally developed* sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- includes *limited* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to visualize the events or experiences.

### Summary writing—

- is characterized by *substantial* copying of key phrases and *minimal* paraphrasing.

### Response to literature writing—

- demonstrates a *limited* understanding of the literary work.
- provides *weak* support for judgments.

1

### The writing—

- addresses *only one part* of the writing task.
- demonstrates *no* understanding of purpose.
- *lacks* a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure.
- *lacks* a central idea but may contain *marginally related* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes *no* sentence variety.
- contains *serious errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

### Narrative writing—

- *lacks* a sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- *lacks* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to visualize the events or experiences.

### Summary writing—

- is characterized by substantial copying of *indiscriminately selected* phrases or sentences.

### Response to literature writing—

- demonstrates little understanding of the literary work.
- *fails* to provide support for judgments.

## Condition Codes

**B** = Blank

**R** = Student refused to write

**W** = Wrong prompt

Student receives no credit for writing test and no California Standards Test English-Language Arts score.

**C** = Prompt/Directions copied

**I** = Illegible

**L** = Language other than English

**T** = Off topic

Student receives 0 points for writing test but receives a California Standards Test English-Language Arts score.

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# Grade 7 Persuasive Writing Task

## Administered on April 9 and 10, 2002

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The writing task below was administered to students in grade 7 who took the California Writing Standards Test on April 9 or 10, 2002. The prompt used for the May 21 and 22 administration is shown on page 28. Sample student responses and teacher commentaries are included for both tasks.

### Persuasive Writing Task

#### Directions

- In this writing test, you will write a persuasive essay or letter.
- You have 60 minutes to plan, write, and proofread.

#### Scoring

Your writing will be scored on how well you:

- state your position on the topic;
- describe the points in support of your position, including examples and other evidence;
- anticipate and address readers' concerns and arguments against your position; and
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

#### Writing the Persuasive Essay or Letter

Your principal wants to host a "Celebrity Week" at your school. What celebrity would you most like to invite to speak to your school? Write a letter to your principal to convince him or her to invite the celebrity you have chosen. Give convincing reasons that support your opinion and address the concerns of those who would argue against your position. Explain your reasons with specific details.

Your writing will be scored on how well you:

- state your position on the topic;
- describe the points in support of your position, including examples and other evidence;
- anticipate and address readers' concerns and arguments against your position; and
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

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## **Persuasive Task—Grade 7**

Student responses to this persuasive task and to the task on page 28 were scored using the Grade 7 Scoring Rubric shown on pages 35–36. This rubric incorporates portions of the English-language arts writing strategies and written conventions content standards that address writing in general and includes criteria specific to narrative writing.

### **Standard**

#### **Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)**

2.4 Write persuasive compositions:

- a. State a clear position or perspective in support of a proposition or proposal.
- b. Describe the points in support of the proposition, employing well-articulated evidence.
- c. Anticipate and address reader concerns and counterarguments.

### **Grade 7 Focus**

For this task and for the task on page 28, students were expected to state a clear position or perspective and support this position with well-articulated evidence. Students who did well used organized and relevant arguments to support their positions. The most effective persuasive compositions provided thoroughly developed supporting evidence and convincingly addressed readers' concerns, biases, and expectations. Due to ambiguity in the directions, which instructed students to write a persuasive essay or letter, either essay or letter format was deemed acceptable during the scoring process. For consistency, all the following sample student responses are referred to as essays.

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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for April 9 and 10 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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## Score Point 4 Essay

### Student Work

Dear Principal:

I think we should invite Shaquille O'Neal for the upcoming celebrity week. He has been my favorite basketball player since he came into the N.B.A. in 1992. I think it would be fitting for Shaq to come to our school while he is enjoying his best season. I'm not saying this because he is simply a good basketball player. He is also a charitable person and a great role model. Shaq hosts festivities like Shaq-a-Claus and Shaqs-Giving for the poor people of the Los Angeles area. On Shaqs-Giving he donates money to buy food and serves a feast for the less fortunate on Thanksgiving Day. On Shaq-a-Claus, he shows his generosity by buying presents for the poor and holds a Christmas party for them. The presents, mind you, aren't trinkets. He'll give out stuff like N64's, Nerf guns, etc. Through all his fame, Shaq never forgets where he came from. He is constantly repaying his parents for raising him well, buying them things like new cars, and a great new house.

I wouldn't be the only one eager to see Shaq show up at this Jr. High. Besides being a great person, Shaquille O'Neal is having a heck of a season. Averaging 28.2 points, 14.3 rebounds, 3.32 blocks a game, and even improving his free throw shooting, Shaq is the leading candidate for the Most Valuable Player Award. Personally, I don't think there's any argument about who would be a more fitting a choice for celebrity week than Shaquille O'Neal.

You might think all that I am saying is just talk, a bunch of words his agent sent out to make him look good, but Shaq is truly the Most Valuable Player, or Most Valuable Person for that matter. When elected to the 50 best players ever in the N.B.A., Shaq modestly refused the honor, saying he thought others deserved it that weren't elected, like

### Commentary

The writer clearly addresses all parts of the writing task, authoritatively defending Shaquille O'Neal for celebrity speaker and clearly addressing reader concerns. The writer provides details to support the central idea—that O'Neal is exceptional as a person and an athlete. The essay describes O'Neal's generosity during the holidays, his appreciation for his parents, and his accomplishments in basketball and addresses suspicions that the writer may be reciting public relations copy by describing O'Neal's modesty.

The writer maintains a consistent organizational structure, introducing two supporting arguments—O'Neal's generosity and athletic achievements—in the first half of the essay and addressing reader concerns in the second. Varied sentence structures create a smooth flow: "Earlier this season, around Christmas, I myself was watching a Laker's game on T.V. During one of the station identifications, Shaq appeared wearing a Santa hat and a warm smile. He wished everyone who was watching a Merry Christmas, and added if they weren't expecting any presents, he himself would reverse that."

The essay contains few errors in grammar and mechanics, and the errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding.



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## Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for April 9 and 10 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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### Score Point 4 Essay (continued)

#### Student Work

Bob Macadoo or David Thompson. Earlier this season, around Christmas, I myself was watching a Laker's game on T.V. During one of the station identifications, Shaq appeared wearing a Santa hat and a warm smile. He wished everyone who was watching a Merry Christmas, and added if they weren't expecting any presents, he himself would reverse that. I hope I have made it clear that Shaq is definitely the best choice for Fruitvale Jr. High's First Annual Celebrity Week!

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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for April 9 and 10 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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## Score Point 3 Essay

### Student Work

Dear Mr. Principal:

I think that you should invite Steve Young for Celebrity week. Steve is a very hard worker, and he loves what he does. He would encourage kids to do what they love.

Steve has gone through many injuries in his career. As quarterback for the San Francisco Forty-niners, he had bumps, bruises, and scrapes on numerous occasions. He knows what it's like to have something bad happen to you.

Steve would address the kids that you shouldn't give up on anything, that you shouldn't let something stand in your way of reaching your goals. He has been that kind of person all through his career. Many people criticized Steve because he didn't win Super Bowls, but he kept playing and trying and finally won a Super Bowl with the Forty-niners.

Many kids are fans of Steve, and they would listen to what he had to say. They would believe him. He could tell them about how hard he had to work before he became a starting quarterback for San Francisco.

Some people might think that Steve is a bad choice. They might think that someone who has had a long and prosperous career wouldn't be a good choice. The people might even think that someone as smart as him with a degree in law wouldn't be good for kids. Well I ask, who would be? Some musician who has most likely been involved with the law or drugs? Steve Young would be a good choice because he would be a good role model for kids.

Sincerely,

### Commentary

The writer addresses all parts of the task, proposing Steve Young as the celebrity speaker, providing reasons to support that choice, and addressing reader concerns. The essay contains a central idea—that Steve Young is a worthy example because he overcame obstacles through hard work—but supporting evidence is sketchy. A number of sentences are simple, and some are awkward (“Steve would address the kids that you shouldn't give up on anything . . .”), but the essay contains complex and compound sentences as well. The organization is mostly consistent: the first two body paragraphs explain that Steve Young overcame injuries and criticism and the third explains that his work ethic would make him a persuasive speaker. The essay contains a few lapses in grammar—references to a vague “you” and an awkward “The people” to begin a sentence in the final paragraph. These do not interfere with the reader's understanding.

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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for April 9 and 10 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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## Score Point 2 Essay

### Student Work

Dear Principal,

The celebrity I am going to chose is Michael Jordan. The reason I am going to chose Michael Jordan is because he is one of the greatest basketball player who ever lived. Michael Jordan did not only play basketball, he was a very good golfer, and he also played baseball but he was not that good at it so he went back to basketball. The reason I think that you should choose Michael Jordan is because about 75% of the kids are into sports, and I think that they would love to have Michael Jordan on stage talking to us. If you do not think Michael Jordan should come to our school as a celebrity because of sports, like I said about 75% of the kids at our school are into sports. That is the reason why I think Michael Jordan should come to our school for "Celebrity Week". Remember this, Jordan is considered one of greates basketball players who ever lived, now he is retired.

### Commentary

This writer addresses part of the writing task, arguing that Michael Jordan should speak because he was a great basketball player and was skilled at other sports. The essay, however, only faintly addresses objections ("If you do not think Michael Jordan should come to our school as a celebrity because of sports..."). The writer reiterates a single piece of evidence to support the choice of speaker and to refute objections—that 75 percent of the students in the school play sports.

The organization is weak: The first sentence introduces the writer's choice of celebrity, but rather than coming to a conclusion, the essay comes to a stop. The organization is also marred by irrelevant information that Jordan "was not that good at [baseball]" and that "now he is retired."

Sentences are repetitive ("The celebrity I am going to chose is..."; "The reason I am going to chose..."; "The reason I think that you should choose ..."). Although the writer attempts compound and complex sentences, they tend to run on. The essay contains errors in verb tense ("chose" for "choose") and in agreement ("player" for "players"), but these errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding.

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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for April 9 and 10 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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## Score Point 1 Essay

### Student Work

Dear Ms.

March, 1, 00

I'm wrighting to ask you, about celebrity week. I was wondering if we do a fund raizer, can you have Justin Timberlake or Will Smith come. If you could that would be great. All the kids would love it. If We could, we would have to vote for either or them. Thanks alot for your time.

Sincearly,

### Commentary

The writer understands the need to propose a celebrity but does not recognize the need to argue for the choice. Without a proposition to defend, the essay lacks a central idea and supporting evidence other than “the kids would love it.” The essay exhibits a rudimentary organization consisting of an introductory sentence, concluding sentence, and middle, but none of these moves toward a persuasive end, and the writer makes no attempt to address reader concerns. Although the essay contains complex sentences, they are weakened by repetitive phrasing: “... if we do a fund raizer”; “If you could ...”; “If We could ...”

The essay contains many errors in conventions, such as misspellings (“wrighting”; “celeberty”; “Sincearly”), a needless comma in the first sentence, and a question mark missing from the second sentence.

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# Grade 7 Persuasive Writing Task

## Administered on May 21 and 22, 2002

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The writing task below was administered to students in grade 7 who took the California Writing Standards Test on May 21 or 22, 2002. Sample student responses and teacher commentaries are presented on the pages following the task shown below.

### Persuasive Writing Task

#### Directions

- In this writing test, you will write a persuasive essay or letter.
- You have 60 minutes to plan, write, and proofread.

#### Scoring

Your writing will be scored on how well you:

- state your position on the topic;
- describe the points in support of your position, including examples and other evidence;
- anticipate and address readers' concerns and arguments against your position; and
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

#### Writing the Persuasive Essay or Letter

A new school is opening in your district. The school board is considering a dress code that will require the students to wear uniforms. What is your opinion on this issue? Write a letter to the school board expressing your opinion. Give convincing reasons that support your opinion and address the concerns of those who would argue against your position. Explain your reasons with specific details.

Your writing will be scored on how well you:

- state your position on the topic;
- describe the points in support of your position, including examples and other evidence;
- anticipate and address readers' concerns and arguments against your position; and
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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## Score Point 4 Essay

### Student Work

A policy of school uniforms assumes that clothes affect the way students function at school. I strongly disagree with the assumption that kids are able or unable to learn in certain types of clothing. I have strong evidence from a child's point of view on this subject, and how I reached my decision.

First of all, I can see why the idea about a dress-code policy would appeal to adults. They think that having uniforms will improve student behavior, get rid of competition among students about clothing, and improve school spirit. But this decision should not be made without feedback from the students who would be affected by it. I can see why shocking and inappropriate clothing is forbidden at most schools because it distracts students from their work. That rule is understandable, and that is why there is a certain dress-code policy in each district. It is used to keep students clothing within reason.

Many people who have grown up in a different generation tend to see kids in the present as less responsible. In certain aspects of daily life, that may be true. On the other hand, if kids today seem less responsible, maybe it is because they are not given the chance to be responsible. If this dress code is enforced, it will be as if they are laying out the children's outfits for them. If they decide not to have this proposition, the students will have to pick out an outfit themselves and responsibly judge whether it is tasteful and appropriate for school, or face the consequence.

If students are able to choose what they feel is right to wear, then they will feel a sense of maturity that a mandatory dress policy would take away. Children's style preferences differ greatly. Kids feel comfortable in many different types of clothing,

### Commentary

The writer clearly addresses all parts of the writing task, providing relevant arguments to support the writer's contention and convincingly addressing opposition concerns. The essay begins with a firm statement of the writer's position ("I strongly disagree with the assumption that kids are able or unable to learn in certain types of clothing") and concludes with an effective appeal: "Let the children be responsible for themselves." The body shows a clear structure, first acknowledging possible reader concerns and then providing arguments to support the writer's position. The writer develops the argument with relevant explanations: allowing students to choose their dress will enable them to be responsible, feel comfortable, and express their individuality.

The writer employs a variety of sentence types and uses transitions effectively: "Many people who have grown up in a different generation tend to see kids in the present as less responsible. In certain aspects of daily life, that may be true. On the other hand, if kids today seem less responsible, maybe it is because they are not given the chance to be responsible." The essay contains few errors in the conventions of the English language, and these errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding.

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## Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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### Score Point 4 Essay (continued)

#### Student Work

making it difficult to choose only one type to suit everyone. It should be recognized that although inappropriate clothing should be outlawed, taking away the freedom of being comfortable should not.

Children feel the need to be very unique, be it through music, hairstyles, or especially clothes. Clothes define what kind of personality or lifestyle a person may have. They may be sporty, relaxed, or the dressy type. Clothes add a strong sense of individuality to a student. They express a lot about the person.

In conclusion, I think that requiring uniforms for the new school would be an unwise decision. It would make students feel dull and childish. If students were allowed input on this proposed change, the school board might have a change of heart. I hope that I have been able to express my strong opinion about this subject, and I urge the School board to reconsider. Let the children be responsible for themselves.

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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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## Score Point 3 Essay

### Student Work

Dear School board,

I think there should be uniforms for three reasons: First, the children do not have to worry about designer clothes and will pay more attention to school and homework instead of worrying who has the most expensive outfit. Number two, the school will look neater and more organized because everyone will look the same. Thirdly, you will have less clothes to wash because it is only one outfit.

First of all, children worrying too much about their clothes today is a huge problem. I understand kids want to be individuals but they can do that on the weekends when there is no school. Also kids pay less attention to school and more attention to their clothes because they think "I need to get those designer jeans and if they don't have them and they want them, that is all they will be thinking about. It's not like they never get to wear their own style of clothes, it just won't be at school, school time is the principals time and weekends are the kids time.

Second of all, the school will look more organized and neater. Some kids these days wear baggy pants that look sloppy and undescent. If someone came to a school where they wear uniforms, they would think "I like that school, it looks very proper and descent." Also other parents would see the children and say "I would like my child to go to that school." What you could do is have a "free clothes day once a month and I'm positive the kids would enjoy that.

Thirdly, the outfit makes life easier for the parents, and the kids! Usually the parents say "Children sort out your clothes to do the laundry, so I can wash it." The children don't want to sort out the laundry because it's boring, and the parents don't want to do the laundry because they have other

### Commentary

The writer responds to all parts of the writing task and shows an understanding of the purpose. Although the structure is somewhat obvious, the essay has a clear central idea, an opening paragraph that introduces the writer's points, and a conclusion that reiterates them. The body only briefly acknowledges reader concerns, but it provides a clear progression of arguments to support the writer's position. The essay does not contain substantial supporting detail, but the writer generally supports arguments with relevant explanations and makes liberal use of transitions to move the reader along.

For the most part, the writer exhibits control of sentences and uses a variety of structures. Although there are scattered errors in spelling and in use of commas and quotation marks, these errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding and, for the most part, the writer uses conventions appropriately.



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## Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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### Score Point 3 Essay (continued)

#### Student Work

things to do. So the kids won't have to sort out their clothes because they only have one outfit for school! The parents still might have to do a little bit of laundry, but not as much and not as often.

In conclusion, I think there should be uniforms. Because like I said, kids will concentrate on school more than designer clothes, the school will look organized if someone comes to see it, and it makes life easier for kids and parents. So please when you think about having uniforms or not, read this letter and remember all the great things I mentioned.

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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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## Score Point 2 Essay

### Student Work

Dear School Board,

I myself would say go ahead and make us wear the uniforms. I think there a good idia because people wont have to get up in the morning and search for something to wear. But with uniforms you already know what you're going to wear.

Another reason is that you wont get teased because you don't have name brand clothes. All the other people will be wearing the same thing and no one could say anything.

One other reason why I would like them because some clothes that kids wear to school is promoting something bad.

I hope you think about getting uniforms because I think it could help us out alot.

Thank you,

### Commentary

Although this essay exhibits a vague understanding of the purpose, it does not address all aspects of the writing task. The first paragraph jumps abruptly into the writer's argument ("I myself would say go ahead and make us wear the uniforms") without putting the issue into an introductory context. The writer provides arguments in favor of uniforms (students "wont have to get up in the morning and search for something to wear" and "wont get teased," and dress chosen by students sometimes "is promoting something bad"), but these arguments are presented in a random order. The writer does not address reader concerns. Moreover, the writer relies on generalities instead of evidence and details to elaborate arguments: "All the other people will be wearing the same thing and no one could say anything," and "I think [wearing uniforms] could help us out alot."

Many sentence structures are repetitive, consisting of a main clause followed by a subordinate clause that is introduced by "because." The essay contains errors in spelling ("there" instead of "they're"; "idia" instead of "idea") and in agreement ("clothes . . . is promoting"). Some of the errors in conventions may interfere with the reader's understanding.

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# Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for May 21 and 22 Grade 7 Persuasive Task

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## Score Point 1 Essay

### Student Work

Dear School Board,

I disagree of the dresscode because I think kids should dress the way they want to if it makes them fill good about themself. I know I would fill good because won't be looking like everyone eals. I also know that my friends would be happy because you won't be having the thing on every day. If you had to dress one way you won't like it at all so that is my reason way I disagree on the drees code.

### Commentary

Although this essay addresses some of the writing task, it contains only the rudiments of a beginning, middle, and end. The writing does not address possible reader concerns, and the writer's reasons for letting students choose their clothing—that they will feel better if they don't look like everyone else and don't have to wear the same clothes everyday—are not explained or supported with evidence.

Sentence structures are repetitive: three of the essay's four sentences consist of a main clause followed by a subordinate clause that begins with "because." The essay contains mistakes with prepositions ("I disagree of the dresscode"; "my reason way I disagree on the drees code") and pronouns ("I also know that my friends would be happy because you won't be having the thing on every day"). Spelling errors ("eals" for "else"; "fill" for "feel") could interfere with the reader's understanding.

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# Grade 7 Scoring Rubric

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The scoring rubric that follows is used to assign scores to students' written responses on the grade 7 writing tests. This rubric includes two sets of criteria. The criteria under "the writing" are adapted from the English-language arts writing strategies and written conventions of English content standards. These criteria are used to evaluate written responses in all genres for their clarity of purpose, central idea, and organization; their coherence; and their use of supporting evidence, sentence variety, and writing conventions. The criteria under "fictional or autobiographical narrative writing," "response to literature writing," "persuasive writing," and "summary writing," adapted from the grade 7 writing applications standards for these genres, are used to evaluate student writing in the specific genres to which they apply.

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## 4 The writing—

- *clearly* addresses all parts of the writing task.
- demonstrates a *clear* understanding of purpose and audience.
- maintains a *consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including the *effective* use of transitions.
- includes a *clearly presented* central idea with *relevant* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes a *variety* of sentence types.
- contains *few, if any, errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

### Fictional or autobiographical narrative writing—

- provides a *thoroughly developed* plot line, including major and minor characters and a *definite* setting.
- includes *appropriate* strategies (e.g., dialogue; suspense; narrative action).

## Response to literature writing—

- develops interpretations that demonstrate a *thoughtful*, comprehensive grasp of the text.
- organizes *accurate and coherent* interpretations around *clear* ideas, premises, or images from the literary work.
- provides *specific* textual examples and details to support the interpretations.

## Persuasive writing—

- *authoritatively* defends a position with precise and relevant evidence and *convincingly* addresses the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

## Summary writing—

- is characterized by paraphrasing of the main idea(s) and *significant* details.

---

## 3 The writing—

- addresses all parts of the writing task.
- demonstrates a *general* understanding of purpose and audience.
- maintains a *mostly consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including the *effective* use of some transitions.
- presents a central idea with *mostly relevant* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes a *variety* of sentence types.
- contains *some errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

### Fictional or autobiographical narrative writing—

- provides an *adequately developed* plot line, including major and minor characters and a *definite* setting.
- includes *appropriate* strategies (e.g., dialogue; suspense; narrative action).

## Response to literature writing—

- develops interpretations that demonstrate a comprehensive grasp of the text.
- organizes accurate and *reasonably* coherent interpretations around *clear* ideas, premises, or images from the literary work.
- Provides textual examples and details to support the interpretations.

## Persuasive writing—

- *generally* defends a position with relevant evidence and addresses the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

## Summary writing—

- is characterized by paraphrasing of the main idea(s) and *significant* details.

**2****The writing—**

- addresses *only parts* of the writing task.
- demonstrates *little* understanding of purpose and audience.
- maintains an *inconsistent* point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure, which may include *ineffective or awkward* transitions that do not unify important ideas.
- *suggests* a central idea with *limited* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes *little* variety in sentence types.
- contains *several errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors **may** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

**Fictional or autobiographical narrative writing—**

- provides a *minimally developed* plot line, including characters and a setting.
- *attempts* to use strategies but with *minimal* effectiveness (e.g., dialogue; suspense; narrative action).

**Response to literature writing—**

- develops interpretations that demonstrate a *limited* grasp of the text.
- includes interpretations that *lack* accuracy or coherence as related to ideas, premises, or images from the literary work.
- provides *few, if any*, textual examples and details to support the interpretations.

**Persuasive writing—**

- defends a position with *little, if any*, evidence and *may* address the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

**Summary writing—**

- is characterized by *substantial* copying of key phrases and *minimal* paraphrasing.

**1****The writing—**

- addresses *only one part* of the writing task.
- demonstrates *no* understanding of purpose and audience.
- *lacks* a point of view, focus, organizational structure, and transitions that unify important ideas.
- *lacks* a central idea but may contain *marginally related* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes *no* sentence variety.
- contains *serious errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

**Fictional or autobiographical narrative writing—**

- *lacks* a developed plot line.
- *fails* to use strategies (e.g., dialogue; suspense; narrative action).

**Response to literature writing—**

- demonstrates *little* grasp of the text.
- *lacks* an interpretation or *may* be a simple retelling of the passage.
- *lacks* textual examples and details.

**Persuasive writing—**

- *fails* to defend a position with *any* evidence and *fails* to address the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

**Summary writing—**

- is characterized by substantial copying of *indiscriminately selected* phrases or sentences.

**Condition Codes****B** = Blank**R** = Student refused to write**W** = Wrong prompt

Student receives no credit for writing test and no California Standards Test English-Language Arts score.

**C** = Prompt/Directions copied**I** = Illegible**L** = Language other than English**T** = Off topic

Student receives 0 points for writing test but receives a California Standards Test English-Language Arts score.